

Thursday, June 19, 2025

Registration open 12:00 pm - 2:15 pm, 2nd Floor Promenade | The Mysterious Bookshop open 9:00 am - 6:30 pm, Nassau West & East, 2nd Floor

6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

THRILLERFEST OPENING RECEPTION Co-Hosted by St. Martin's Press, Minotaur Books, Tor Publishing Group, Forge | Trianon Ballroom, 3rd Floor

## THRILLERFEST XX - 2025

Friday, June 20, 2025

Registration open 7:30 am - 6:30pm, 2nd Floor Promenade  
The Mysterious Bookshop open 9:00 am - 6:30 pm, Nassau West & East  
All events are on the 2nd floor of the New York Hilton Midtown unless otherwise indicated.

	Sutton North & Center	Beekman	Sutton South	Regent
8:00 am - 8:50 am	<b>BAIT, SWITCH OR DISTRACTION?</b> <b>Using Red Herrings</b> Moderator: Dwayne Goetzel David Ellis Jamie Freveletti Melinda Leigh Vanessa Lillie Catherine McKenzie Greg Wands	<b>FEAR, HIGH STAKES OR CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT?</b> <b>Ratcheting up Tension</b> Moderator: Boyd Morrison Christine Carbo Joshua Corin Trevor Firetog S.C. Godfrey J.B. Manas Jon McGoran	<b>TEAR-JERKER, H.E.A., OR CLIFFHANGER?</b> <b>Writing Satisfying Endings</b> Moderator: Allison Brennan Anne Burt Audrey J. Cole Sarah Zachrich Jeng Matthew Sullivan Tony Wirt	<b>HOOK, LINE OR SINKER?</b> <b>The Art of the Short Story</b> Moderator: Meredith Anthony Mystli Berry Diana Hansen-Young Nick Kolakowski Stefanie Leder Lawrence Light Stacy Woodson
8:55 am - 9:45 am	<b>NEW YORK TIMES, USA TODAY OR AMAZON?</b> <b>How to Become a Bestseller</b> Moderator: Neil Nyrén Tom Colgan Dan Conway McKenna Jordan Kelley Ragland Krishan Trotman	<b>INTRIGUE, TRAUMA OR IN MEDIAS RES?</b> <b>Good Beginnings</b> Moderator: Dervia McTiernan R.G. Belsky Georgina Cross Simon Gervais Rick Mofina Lori Rader-Day Hayley Scrivenor	<b>WHO, WHEN OR WHY?</b> <b>The Psychological Thriller Summit</b> Moderator: Sonica Mizerski Andrea Bartz K.T. Nguyen Wendy Walker Stacy Willingham Olivia Worley	<b>TONE, POV OR SYNTAX?</b> <b>Finding Your Author Voice</b> Moderator: John Copenhaver Catherine Bruns Marco Carocari Kelsey Cox Doug Grad Caryl Janis Gerrit Lewis Bryan Lienesch
9:45 am - 10:05am	All authors from morning sessions will be signing books in Murray Hill West & East			
10:10 am - 11:00 am	<b>STANDALONE, SERIES OR BOTH?</b> <b>Thriller Awards Nominees</b> Moderator: Tosca Lee David Baldacci Meg Gardiner Roy Johansen Dervia McTiernan Lisa Scottoline Lisa Unger	<b>MEDIEVAL, WORLD WAR II OR SWINGING SIXTIES?</b> <b>Writing Historical Thrillers</b> Moderator: Tracey Devlyn Kate Bell John Copenhaver Elizabeth Crowens Sara DiVello Boyd Morrison	<b>FIRST, THIRD OR OMNISCIENT?</b> <b>The Many Powers of POV</b> Moderator: Carter Wilson Elliot Ackerman Nekesa Alfa Sorboni Banerjee Reed Bunzel W. Michael Gear Heather Graham	<b>RED HERRINGS, CLUES OR PUZZLES?</b> <b>Writing Mystery Novels</b> Moderator: Tessa Weger Daniella Bennett John Dobbyn Maggie Giles Joseph LeValley M. A. (Mary) Monnin Lynn Tavernier Susan Wolfe
11:05 am - 11:55 am	Spotlight Guest Oyinkan Braithwaite, interviewed by Hank Phillippi Ryan   Sutton North & Sutton Center			
12:00 pm - 12:30 pm	<b>WORKSHOPS, PERKS OR SELF PROMOTION? Getting the Most Out of Your ITW Membership</b> ITW Membership Meeting (all are welcome, members or aspiring members, prizes)   Sutton North & Sutton Center			
12:40pm - 1:30pm	<b>DARK, DAMAGED OR DEPRESSED?</b> <b>Dramatic Thrillers</b> Moderator: Roland Gulliver Will Dean Mary Kubica Chris Pavone Lisa Scottoline Kate White	<b>JEALOUSY, REVENGE OR LOVE?</b> <b>Tension in Domestic Suspense</b> Moderator: Liz Talley Ashley Elston Kendra Harpster Darby Kane Nicole Moleti Krista Wells	<b>NARRATION, MARKETING OR PRODUCTION?</b> <b>How Audio Ups the Value for Authors</b> Moderator: Suzanne Elise Freeman Scott Brick Stacy Creamer Will Damron Jessica Kaye January LaVoy	<b>CONFLICT, CHAOS OR CRUCIBLE?</b> <b>Writing Compelling Action</b> Moderator: J.M Adams Jessie Garcia T.R. Hendricks Jeffrey James Higgins John David Mann Martin Rooney Dan Stratman
1:30 pm - 1:50 pm	All authors from midday sessions, including Spotlight Guest Oyinkan Braithwaite, will be signing in Murray Hill West & East			
1:50 pm - 2:50 pm	<b>THE TWISTED WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB EVENT</b> Oyinkan Braithwaite, Robert Dugoni, Steve Feldberg, Joseph Finder, Gregg Hurwitz, Sarah Pekkanen, Stacy Willingham with K.J. Howe moderating   Sutton North & Sutton Center			
3:00 pm - 3:50 pm	<b>STEADY, ACCELERATING OR WHIPLASH?</b> <b>Addictive Pacing</b> Moderator: Samantha Skai Joseph Finder Charlaine Harris Wanda Morris Walter Mosley Tessa Wegerl	<b>UNPREDICTABLE, UNASSUMING OR UNEXPECTED?</b> <b>Types of Antagonists</b> Moderator: Bonnie Traymore Yasmin Angee Daco Aufferorde Paul Doiron Deborah J. Ledford Ronald Malfi Steph Nelson	<b>GROCERY STORES, GOLF LINKS OR PILATES?</b> <b>Mining Suburbia for Drama</b> Moderator: Paula Munier Elle Cosimano Faith Gardner Jaime Lynn Hendricks Kaira Rouda Miranda Smith	<b>LINEAR, ROLLERCOASTER OR ZIG ZAG?</b> <b>My Publishing Story: Round 1</b> Moderator: D.J. Palmer S.K. Andrews Jenn Bregman Mary Davis Carter Caroline Cleveland Angela Douglas Elisabeth Eaves Michelle Maryk
3:55 pm - 4:45 pm	Spotlight Guest Jennifer Hillier, interviewed by Lisa Gardner   Sutton North & Sutton Center			
4:50 pm - 5:40 pm	<b>AUCTION, OPTION CLAUSE OR SLUSH PILE?</b> <b>Fresh Ways to Be Published</b> Moderator: Isabella Maldonado Joe Brosnan Jenna Jankowski Madeline McIntosh Shawn Reilly Simmons Luisa Cruz Smith	<b>NOBLE, POWERFUL OR AMBITIOUS?</b> <b>Writing Characters With Depth</b> Moderator: Alex Finlay Mark Alpert Mark Edwards Mike Papantoniio Robert Rolstein L.S. Stratton Ashley Winstead	<b>LIGHTS, CAMERA OR ACTION?</b> <b>Filmworthy Writing</b> Moderator: Jon Land Peter Malone Elliott Jennifer Fawcett Matthew Quinn Martin David Morrell Susan Walter Matt Witten	<b>SHERIFF, LAWYER OR JUDGE?</b> <b>Writing about Crime and the Law</b> Moderator: Jerri Williams David Bushman Thomas B. Cavanagh Bonnie Klatter Marcy McCreary McCracken Poston, Jr.
5:40 pm - 6:00 pm	Authors from late afternoon sessions will be signing in Murray Hill West & East, including Spotlight Guest Jennifer Hillier and The Twisted Women's Book Club Authors			
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm	FRIDAY NIGHT COCKTAIL PARTY sponsored by Kevin Anderson & Associates   Mercury Suite (3rd Floor)			

THRILLERFEST-XX-2025  
Subject to change -- Updated June 13, 2025

# THRILLERFEST XX - 2025

Saturday, June 21, 2025

Registration open 7:30 am - 2:15 pm 2nd Floor Promenade, Awards Banquet Check-In 5:30 pm - 7:15 pm, 3rd Floor West Promenade The Mysterious Bookshop open 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Nassau West & East All events are on the 2nd floor of the New York Hilton Midtown unless otherwise indicated			
	Sutton North & Center	Beekman	Sutton South
8:00 am - 8:50 am	<b>FLASHBACKS, PARALLEL OR THREE ACT?</b> <b>Story Structure in Thrillers</b> Moderator: Kyle Steele Emily Carpenter Tullan Holmqvist Mandy McHugh A.G. Mock Robert Swartwood	<b>HUNT, DIG OR SNIFF?</b> <b>Researching the Dark Side</b> Moderator: Hannah Morrissey Matt Cook Andrew DeYoung Noelle W. Ihli Ward Larsen Josh Moehling	<b>ANXIETY, ENVY OR FEAR?</b> <b>Emotions in Thrillers</b> Moderator: Karin Nordin J. Luke Bennecke Linda Hurtado Bond Allison Buccola Rob Hart Cara Reinard
	<b>TRANSFORMATION, ADVENTURE OR UPHILL BATTLE?</b> <b>Crafting Thriller Plots</b> Moderator: James L'Etoile Sharon Dukett Don Helin Joanne Leedom-Ackerman Michael McLaughlin Janna McMahan Michael Ransom Carla Seyler		
9:00 am - 10:00 am	ITW PRESENTS THE 2025 DEBUT AUTHOR CLASS BREAKFAST <b>Matthew Becker, Lori Brand, R. John Dingle, Laurie L. Dove, Jacqueline Faber, James Foley, Bill Gormley, Jenni Howell, Carinn Jade, Cherisa "C.J." Jerez, Miles Joyner, Maria Kelson, Laura Leffer, Andrew Ludington, Marty Ludlum, Tamara Miller, Jennifer Moorhead, Jennifer K. Morita, Rachel Paris, Ande Pliego, Gregg Podolski, Gary Quesenberry, Cynthia Rice, Michael Rigg, Saratoga Schaefer, Dianna Sinovic, Suja Sukumar, Mark Thielman, Joel E. Turner, Michael Wendroff, Jen Marie Wiggins, Aliah Wright</b> Introductions by Robert Dugoni   Grand Ballroom (3rd Floor)		
10:00 am - 10:25 am	<b>Authors from early morning sessions will be signing in Murray Hill West &amp; East, including the 2025 DEBUT AUTHORS</b>		
10:30 am - 11:20 am	<b>LECTER, RAMBO OR DRACULA?</b> <b>Creating Memorable Characters</b> Moderator: Sarah Pekkanen Alex Finlay Lisa Gardner John Grisham Jennifer Hillier David Morrell Lisa Unger	<b>BEST STANDALONE, SERIES OR DEBUT?</b> <b>Thriller Awards Nominees</b> Moderator: Todd Gerber Eric Beetner Kate Brody Libby Cudmore Alejandro Nodarse Jason Rekulak Lori Roy	<b>COMING OF AGE, FIRST LOVE OR THE CHOSEN ONE?</b> <b>Writing About and for Younger Readers</b> Moderator: Lee Matthew Goldberg James Daley Arned McDonnell Chris Mullen Marisha Pessl R.L. Stine Melanie Sumrow
	<b>HEADLINES, EAVESDROPPING OR PEOPLE WATCHING?</b> <b>Where Writers Get Their Ideas</b> Moderator: Samuel Octavius Chelsea Conratt William Maz Glenn Parris Michael Stagg Andrew Welsh-Huggins		
11:30 am - 12:20 pm	<b>ThrillerMaster John Grisham, interviewed by Lisa Unger   Sutton North &amp; Sutton Center</b>		
12:20 pm - 12:40 pm	<b>Authors from the late morning sessions will sign in Murray Hill West &amp; East</b> Please note that John Grisham will only be pre-signing the books for sale at our onsite bookstore. He is not able to sign any other books.		
12:50 pm - 1:40 pm	<b>VOICE, SPECIAL EFFECTS OR FULL CAST?</b> <b>What Makes Thrillers Pop in Audio?</b> Moderator: Suzanne Elise Freeman Scott Brick Gregg Hurwitz Sarah Pekkanen Karissa Vacker	<b>THE BUTLER, THE TREACHEROUS FRIEND OR THE DARK SECRET?</b> <b>Avoiding Predictable Tropes</b> Moderator: Jaime Levine Esme Addison Jon Land James L'Etoile Donald Maass Otto Penzler Clea Simon	<b>PRIMAL FEAR, GONE GIRL OR THE SIXTH SENSE?</b> <b>Creating Twists that Work</b> Moderator: Elena Hartwell Taylor Steena Holmes Harry Hunsicker Tosca Lee Wanda Morris Aletheia Preston
	<b>HIT, KICK OR PUNCH?</b> <b>Knocking Out Dramatic Fight Scenes</b> Moderator: Ruth Church Simon Gervais Carla Hoch Stephen Mann Adam Plantinga James D. Robertson		
1:50 pm - 2:40 pm	<b>Silver Bullet Award Winner James Patterson, interviewed by Gregg Hurwitz   Sutton North &amp; Sutton Center</b>		
2:40 pm - 3:00 pm	<b>Authors from the early afternoon sessions will sign in Murray Hill West &amp; East, including Silver Bullet Award Winner James Patterson</b>		
3:10 pm - 4:00 pm	<b>REACHER, PLUM OR HOLMES?</b> <b>Series Protagonists</b> Moderator: Hank Phillippi Ryan James O. Born Allison Brennan Robert Dugoni Charlaïne Harris Walter Mosley John Sandford	<b>STRESS, MARRIAGE OR PRESSURE?</b> <b>Thrilling Domestic Suspense</b> Moderator: Jamie Mason Nicole Baart Danielle Girard Seraphina Nova Glass Elise Hart Kipness D.J. Palmer	<b>THOUGHT LEADERS, REVIEWERS OR INFLUENCERS?</b> <b>Social Media Secrets from the Best</b> Moderator: Sara DiVello Tonya Cornish, @BlondeThrillerLover Tabrizia Jones, @CupOfTeaJones Magen Mintchev, @BonechillingBooks Jordan Moblo, @JordysBookClub Danielle Parker
	<b>LINEAR, ROLLERCOASTER OR ZIG ZAG?</b> <b>My Publishing Story: Round 2</b> Moderator: Isabella Maldonado Toni Halleen Omar Hussain Alissa Lee Lenore Nash Ryan Pote Jennifer Sadera Brian Tracey		
4:10 pm - 5:00 pm	<b>HIGH STAKES, UNFORGETTABLE CHARACTERS OR QUALITY WRITING?</b> <b>Writing a Blockbuster</b> Moderator: Jeff Ayers Lou Berney Karen Dionne Heather Graham R.L. Stine Danielle Trussoni	<b>BOND, SMILEY OR LUPIN?</b> <b>Spying around the World</b> Moderator: Traci Abramson I.S. Berry Puja Guha Connor Martin Jonathan Payne Adam Sikes Paul Vidich	<b>YACHTS, HOLLYWOOD OR CHALET?</b> <b>Writing about the Rich and Glamorous</b> Moderator: Susan Lee Kimberly Belle May Cobb Rachel Koller Croft Jon Lindstrom Deborah Goodrich Royce
	<b>TRADITIONAL, HYBRID OR SELF-PUBLISHING?</b> <b>The Many Paths of Publishing</b> Moderator: Elise Hart Kipness D.M. Barr Gayle Brown Sandy Clements Jennifer Pashley Rick Pullen Penny Zang		
5:00 pm - 5:20 pm	<b>Authors from the late afternoon sessions will sign in Murray Hill West &amp; East</b>		
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	<b>PRE-BANQUET COCKTAIL PARTY, hosted by ITW   3rd Floor West Promenade &amp; Grand Ballroom Foyer (3rd Floor)</b>		
7:00 PM	<b>ITW 20th ANNUAL THRILLER AWARDS BANQUET, hosted by Emcee Lisa Scottoline   Grand Ballroom (3rd Floor)</b> <b>2025 ThrillerMaster JOHN GRISHAM, Award Presented by 2009 ThrillerMaster David Morrell</b> <b>2025 Silver Bullet Award Recipient JAMES PATTERSON, Award Presented by 2017 Silver Bullet Award Recipient Lisa Gardner</b> <b>2025 Thriller Legend Award Recipient NEIL NYREN, Award Presented by USA TODAY bestseller Hank Phillippi Ryan</b> <b>2025 Thriller Fan Award Recipient McKENNA JORDAN, Award Presented by ITW Co-Presidents Lisa Unger and Gregg Hurwitz</b> <b>Presentation of the THRILLER AWARDS with ITW VP of Awards, New York Times bestseller Tosca Lee</b>		
	<b>THRILLERMASTER AFTER PARTY honoring 2025 ThrillerMaster JOHN GRISHAM, hosted by ITW   3rd Floor West Promenade and Grand Ballroom Foyer (3rd Floor)</b>		